

REMARKS

Claims 23, 24, 27 and 28 are pending. Claims 23, 27 and 28 have been amended. No new matter has been presented.

Claims 23, 24, 27 and 28 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Koike, U.S. Patent No. 6,181,805. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

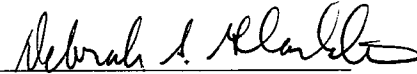
Claims 23, 27 and 28 have been amended to recite retrieving a desired image containing image data which is *identical* to the image data cut out from the registered image. Koike fails to teach or suggest this feature. Rather, Koike teaches that the object region detecting section 109 detects the matching position (X_{\max} , Y_{\max}) and the dictionary image I_{Dn} where the degree of similarity $r(n, X_0, Y_0)$ is maximal and outputs them to a feature point position determining section 110 (col. 5, lines 35-40). Thus, Koike chooses the image which is most similar, but does not retrieve an identical image. Thus, Koike fails to teach or suggest the features of the independent claims. Claim 24 is allowable at least due to its dependency from claim 23.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If it is determined that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no. 245402004000.

Dated: January 27, 2009

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